



## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINE

Moneywort (*Lysimachia nummularia* L.)

### SPECIES CHARACTER

#### DESCRIPTION

Moneywort is a low-growing herb with smooth stems that grow to 2 feet (61 cm) long, have a 0.05-0.1 inch (1.2-2.5 mm) diameter, and branch frequently to form a mat-like growth. The leaves are simple, short-petioled, and opposite. The broadly oval leaves, which are obtuse at both ends, resemble small coins and give the plant its name. The 0.6-1 inch (17-25 mm) solitary flowers are wheel-shaped, 5-petaled, and are found in the leaf axils on a stalk as long as the leaves. The yellow flowers growing from the leaf bases are spotted with small dark red dots and bloom June to August. Moneywort should be accurately identified before attempting any control measures. If identification of the species is in doubt, the plant's identity should be confirmed by a knowledgeable individual and/or by consulting appropriate books.

#### DISTRIBUTION

This plant is a native of Great Britain and much of Europe. It was first introduced as an ornamental. Although initially only widespread in the northeastern U. S. from Georgia to Maine, it now can be found into Canada, throughout the north-central states, and along the west coast. It is distributed throughout Illinois.

#### HABITAT

Moneywort is most abundant in wet meadows, swamps, disturbed floodplain forests, and stream borders. It prefers moist, rich, shaded soils and is likely to be found in lawns, pastures, and along ditches and streams.

#### LIFE HISTORY

This rapidly growing perennial reproduces by seed as well as through a creeping growth habit of the stems. The stem creeps along the ground, rooting at each node when it gets the opportunity. Fruit is a globose capsule that opens longitudinally to expose the many seeds inside. Moneywort remains green throughout most of the year in Illinois.

#### EFFECTS UPON NATURAL AREAS

Moneywort invades floodplain forests, wet and mesic prairies, marshes, and swamps throughout the state. The plant tends to cover the ground with a mat of low-growing vegetation, excluding other herbaceous vegetation. Its ability to root at nodes enables it to cover large areas.



## CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES IN NATURAL COMMUNITIES OF HIGH QUALITY

Moneywort does not appear to be a problem in high-quality communities. In low wetland woods where it is invading, one possible means of control is by prescribed burning in spring or fall when moneywort is green but most native vegetation is dormant. The plant can be hand pulled where practical. All stems and stem fragments should be removed from the area to prevent the stems from rooting again in the soil.

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES ON BUFFER AND SEVERELY DISTURBED SITES

Same as above for high-quality natural communities. In low-quality buffer areas, prolonged submergence will kill moneywort. At restoration sites, moneywort can be controlled by establishing native grasses to shade it out. Suggested grasses include *Cinna arundinacea* and *Elymus virginicus*. Seeding of native grasses should be used only at restoration sites and not at natural areas. Herbicides such as Roundup or Rodeo may be effective control measures, but they have not been tested by Illinois natural area managers.

## FAILED OR INEFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Mowing is not effective since moneywort adheres closely to the ground due to its many rooting nodes. More research is needed concerning the effectiveness of herbicides. No biological controls that are feasible in natural areas are known.

## REFERENCES

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